



Home New Workspace Browse Help Guided Tour

Search Again All Britannica Online

☐ Not sure of the spelling?
Search Tips and Advice

Use the links below to search for additional information on **Simple harmonic motion**.

- [Encyclopædia Britannica](#)
- [Britannica Student Encyclopedia](#)
- [Britannica Internet Guide](#)
- [Video & Media](#)



Unsure of the meaning of a word?
Double-click it to look it up in
Merriam-Webster's
Collegiate Dictionary.

Britannica Student Encyclopedia

Simple harmonic motion

Britannica Student Encyclopedia

E-mail this article [Print this article](#) [Cite this article](#)

in physics, repetitive movement back and forth through one central position so that maximum displacement on one side of the position equals maximum displacement on other side; things that exhibit simple **harmonic** motion include oscillating pendulum, electrons in a wire carrying alternating current, and a vibrating mass attached to a string; this motion called **harmonic** because musical instruments make such vibrations that in turn cause corresponding sound waves in air; concept first published in 1822 by French mathematician Baron Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Fourier.

To cite this page:

"Simple harmonic motion" *Britannica Student Encyclopedia*
<<http://www.search.eb.com/ebi/article?eu=338164&query=harmonic>>
[Accessed December 30, 2002].

[Comments and Questions](#) | [Subscription Form](#)

© 2002 Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.